3:Naah E-5 (1964-1965)1967
NV9 Tzeltal NV9
[p. 457-A] Teklum

682 156 themselves killed." When they see a man who is abusive while drunk, who brags of his power and of that of his animal spirit, they will remark: "That man is going to wake up dead" (*sakubk'inal čamel*). When such a man is killed, no one complains, even among his immediate relatives (cases 5, 10, 14, 16, 19, 22, 24, 26, 27, 29, 31, and 32 are of this type). When I asked [562] why women do not get killed, the response was, "They don't look for trouble" (*ma sleik smul*).

682 *Setting*

	Total	*Dawn*	*Afternoon*	*Evening*	*Night*	*??*
Streets of town	11				11	
Milpa, woods, road out of town	10	2	3	2	2	1
Highway	4		1	1	1	1
In cantina	3		1		2	
In houseyard	3			1	2	
In bed	1				1	
Neighboring hamlets & towns	2		1			1
??	3					3
Total	37	2	6	4	19	6

Where the killing takes place and its timing in the diurnal cycle are directly linked. All of the homicides in the streets of the town were committed at night, while those in the roads out of town near the milpa occurred in the late afternoon or evening. In providing privacy and security from discovery, the darkness of night is functionally equivalent to distance from the 682 town center during the daytime. When I sug- 114 gested that the killings might be reduced if the town would connect the lights that had been installed in the streets, the response was that when they had been in use, killings had increased. The lights helped the killer find his victim, perhaps lying out in the road after a drinking session. He would shoot out the light and then kill his victim.

682 579 The only killings in which considerations of space or time were ignored were those in the cantina during a drunken brawl, for in contrast to the usual killing their onset was unpremeditated.

682 [527] [579] The timing of homicide is related also to the annual cycle: 14 homicides occurred during the fiestas in the town or in a neighboring town. The drunkenness of the fiestas provides an appropriate occasion for killing an enemy, although a drunken brawl is in itself rarely a [755] sufficient motive (two cases). Other opportune [273] times are after a curing ceremony (six cases) and after the gathering of curers during an

3:Nash E-5 (1964-1965)1967
NV9 Tzeltal NV9
[P.457-B] Teklum

682 epidemic (two cases), when people have drunk
[755] a great deal and their motives is fresh in their
[273] mind.

The settings in which homicides occur indi-
682 cate that a killer is expressing not his own
152 bravery but rather his fears. Wounds are fre-
154 quently inflicted from the rear, and often the
[273] victim is outnumbered and set upon by a group. The victim is sometimes invited to drink with his killer(s), and in this session he is disarmed psychologically and physically. Alcohol reduces the chance of his effective reaction, and this is important when a knife or machete is used. Shotgun killings are done at a distance and do not require this tactic, al-
682 though it may still be employed. For drinking
285 serves to reduce the killer's own fears. Drink
213 "heats the blood" and makes unusual be-
152 havior possible. One killer, in recounting his act, was not trying to prove bravery, but rather his own good judgment and cool-headedness. The killer fired at the victim while he was sleeping, his back turned to the door, and killed him. The shot also entered the arm of the
[695] sleeping man's wife. She saw the killer as he
[683] left the scene, but testified in court that she had seen no one. She was, in effect, accepting his verdict that her husband was a witch.[4] This homicide was not regarded by the killer or by anyone else as a heroic act, nor was the killer in recounting it attempting to emphasize anything other than the necessity of the act.

682 *Instrumentality: Weapons and Wounds*
411

gun	14
machete	6
gun and machete	4
knife	3
knife and gun	1
knife and machete	1
knife and stone	1
hatchet	1
nail	1
sandals	1
??	4

The variety of weapons reduces the question of any technological determinism to a minimum. The actual weapon used seems to be a matter of convenience. When more than one is used, it is usually evidence that the assailant had helpers. The nail is unusual. It was hammered into the jaws of a man who had entered the curing profession at an age considered too
682 young. The attack on the jaws of the victim
774 seems related to the power of speech and to the
756 [text continues on p. 461-B]

5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9

or less inebriated, not from greediness, but because it is a ceremonial necessity for him to be in that condition when dealing with the sacred things. Drunkness was a requisite of certain functions among the old Maya, and with the present-day Lacandones,* the Chontal shamans similarly will not perform unless drunk.

Sebastiano Guzman, a Bachajon at El Encanto, a specialist on snake-bite cases, would not treat a friend for snake-bite, although he carried him on his back for two hours to get treatment from us, because the friend could not buy him any rum. It probably would be considered very dangerous to deal with the supernatural healing powers when sober.

When a group of Indians are drinking at any time, the shamans, as soon as they are drunk, go off together to one side and proceed to exchange prayers and prescriptions which they will not discuss when sober. They make a curious spectacle thus; a group of elderly men sitting in a corner passing a bottle about, plainly drunk, and gravely intoning prayers that are obviously to all of them matters of weighty importance.

Of their prayers two, or parts of two, were obtained. The first was copied by a Ladino secretary at El Encanto from the recital of an intoxicated shaman. The shaman became a general object of ridicule to all his people, lay or initiate, for having let out one of his secrets to an outsider. The second was recited by Señor Aguilar of El Encanto, who had overheard it. No one was able to give us any but the most fragmentary and unsatisfactory translations for these prayers; undoubtedly the text is in part archaic, and may contain some gibberish. The manner in which they were acquired, moreover, prevents accurate transcription. They are given here, rather than with the Tzeltal Texts in Appendix V, because of this failure to translate them, and their primarily ethnological value.

I.

hun ahau ilic tunic baken pusti-lum tal kowit' tal keke manic tunic inic kilan kun in ahau keke tunic hun tsak-unti-bak tsak-unti-tci.

Hun Ahau, the Guardian of the Mountains, has been discussed already. *ilic* was said to mean "drove out the sickness," and *tunic*, "placed the sickness." *pusti-lum* contains the stem *lum*, "earth." *tal* may be the stem of the verb *tal-el*, "to come." *kilan* is a lizard used in medicine. *keke tunic* was explained as meaning that the sickness was placed by means of *ajo* fruit. *tsak-unti* is remarkably similar to the Lacandone *tsakuntik*, "to redden," occurring in a

*Tozzer, 1907.

273*
578 YUN PLETO HA* HIC MAYUK XIWEL *A.
731
539 In order to fight without being afraid.

753 In conjunction with collateral evidence, this text provides support for the following points. One of the standing beliefs in Aguacatenango is that sickness of god /XCAMEL YU*UN TYOS/ is essentially curable. Measles is classified as such a [754] sickness. When the children die in a measles epidemic, some "witch" must be laying on further illness components which cause the death. One mode of reducing the witchcraft component in the illness is to kill the witch or witches.

754 The problem of determining who the witch(es) may be in
• 755 such a case as this is very difficult. The well-defined and formally correct mode is to call together several of the curers, have them pulse the patient, hear their announcement that the sick person is suffering from witchcraft and insist that they name the witch or witches. The curers are likely to go as far as to indicate that a witchcraft component is involved in the illness, but they most often are unwilling to name an individual, as their name becomes associated with their testimony and the alleged witch and his kinsmen are likely to impose severe
754 penalties on the curer. The search for the witch, then, must go on, under the force of standing beliefs as follows: Individuals in the community may be assigned a witchcraft potential on the basis of a variety of evidence. In this case the text

not yet appear to be a popular alternative. Generally, the doctor is the last of all medical practitioners referred to in exhausting the curing options in Aguacatenango, though individuals who have had a successful relationship with the doctor are more likely to pursue that option sooner. The only other major class of medical practitioner is the talking saint. Talking saints are more or less representational images of saints who, in conjunction with their "owners" can actively consult with human beings about their trials and tribulations in the world. The most powerful of this class, San Miguel of Soyaló, is about an eight hour trip and a 200 peso fee from Aguacatenango. Talking saints share more features with the curers than they do with doctors. They, like the curers, are predestined by God to their role, but they more directly represent God's omniscience. The cure of the talking saint is more powerful as can be measured by the greater expenditure of funds for such a cure, or as can be measured by his greater ability to divine in the life history of the patient the principal sources of illness.

Admitting then, that illness has general characteristics as described above, we turn our attention to the multiple relations between illness and the drinking of aguardiente.

273 753 periencing strong aversive physical effects. It is likely that individuals who wish to reduce the number of informal drinking performances manipulate the informal drinking segment length, because of standing beliefs about the relationship between drinking and illness. The only way a man can get out of his social obligations is to place himself in the special condition of being particularly prone to illness. Procedures for inducing illness are then likely to become strategies in controlling participation in informal drinking performances.

Aguardiente and curing

273 755 There is considerable variation in the use of aguardiente in the curing ceremonies in Aguacatenango. Two classes of use may be distinguished. The first of these may be called medicinal use. The second class involves drinking by the participants of the curing ceremony other than the patient himself. These two classes of use may be relatively easily distinguished as follows: aguardiente as it is administered to the patient is generally mixed with other substances, although occasionally the curer will give the patient a straight draught of aguardiente. The participants (male, married drink deeply; all others drink an intermittent, non-intoxicating amount) on the other hand drink in the ceremonial drinking pattern. In violation of the cere-

273* monial drinking pattern, the curer, no matter what his age rela-
755 tive to the age of others present, is served first.[1]

273* Drinking by participants in the curing ceremony appears
539 in several text fragments as follows:

MAC'ATIK X*ULAH NAL YA HUC' TRAWO X*OC SPAS POX YU*N HIC *AY SPERSA *A.

Those who cure drink trago first before they go in to cure in order to increase their strength.

SPISIL YO*TAN X*OC TA POSTAWANEH.

So that they will be confident when they go in to cure.

HA* LA YAK' BALOR HAL TRAWI.

It's the aguardiente that gives strength.

PERO *AY H*OLIL MA*K YUC'IK TRAWO HIC NAX YA SPAS POSTO, HA* HIC YA SPASIK POX H*ULELTIK *ABI.

But there are some who don't drink trago before they cure, that's the way they are.

Also:

M. TU*L LIHK YU*C'K.

How did they begin to drink?

C. *E HA* XK'O YILIK HAL XC'IN YAHTAL YO*TAN HKUMRE SME* HOSEPA NUN E.

They went to attend the delivery of my comadre, Josefa's mother, over there.

---

[1] From this relative positioning of drinking we conclude
[156] [554] that the role of curer in the curing situation has more status than the role of old man. In most situations, as has been previously noted, the oldest man present is generally served first.

273* 539 HA* XK'O--TE NEL *AHK'BALTIK KU*NTIK *A HAL *AHK'ABEI

They went over there--we spent the night there last night.

HNUX MA*LAH KUMPRE.

She almost died, compadre.

CAMEN HULEL, LOM LA YAK' SWOKOL.

(The baby) was born dead, she suffered for nothing.

J. ... HA* Z'INABI *E SUNUL *AHK'BAL, MA*A LAHUK *OXE*BUK LITRO I SUNUL *AHK'BAL I.

During the night we drank about three liters, the whole night.

M. *E HAYEBEX *ABI.

And how many of you were there?

J. *E HAYEBOTIK, *E CANE(BOTIK *A SOK CENCO NUN TA HEMEL E, SOK CANTUL *ANZTIK--

How many? Four of us, with Ausencio from over in the valley, and four women.

*E *ULIK STUKEL T'UXAHIK LEK, HA*Z'IN HO*NE MA*BA LOM T'UXAHON LEK ... XLOK' K'AHAL LOK'ONTAL I.

They all got so drunk they fell down. I didn't fall down myself . . . I left as the sun was coming up.

• 755 The curing ceremony is a public performance, the audience of which is constituted of the sick person's near consanguineals, affinals, ritual kin and neighbors. The males in this audience--273* 755 which varies in size depending on the estimated severity of the illness--pace their drinking with that of the curer. He in turn is dependent on the host who initially arranged with him to make the cure for the supply of aguardiente. It is characteristic

273
755 that the curer and the adult males will drink sufficient trago through the night (this being the normal length of a single curing segment) so that at least some of the men will continue drinking the next day in other than the curing setting. (The minimal drinking unit equals ceremonial drinking plus informal drinking).

As is indicated in the first text fragment, drinking on the part of the curer is seen to be a mode of fitting himself for the difficult task he has to perform. "Difficult" means in this context that curing an individual is not necessarily likely to result in the patient getting well and the responses of the family members to a cure that failed may include hostility directed towards the curer.

In the case where the sick person appears to be dying the collected relatives and neighbors continue to accompany him as do one or more curers. They remain until he appears to have recovered from the crisis or until he dies. Drinking continues, though on a somewhat more intermittent basis, across this whole period of time, which may be as long as several days.

Quite often other curers will be called in and the pulsing-curing sequence repeated with the resultant increase again in the consumption of aguardiente. When and if the patient dies, a funeral sequence is initiated which will be described below.

273 * 755 [757] The administration of trago directly to the patient in the course of the curing ceremony is unusual, though it may be mixed with other ingredients (raw eggs, essence of rosemary, the curer's saliva and/or chicken blood) and a cup or bowl of this mixture given to the patient to drink. Alternatively it may be applied to the body of the patient, the curer blowing it on him a mouthful at a time. Aguardiente is occasionally used to drug chickens which are used in the course of the ceremony. We have seen chickens so drugged placed on the patient's head where they calmly remain for a period of a half hour or more.

273 * 764 Drinking during the funeral ceremony

The burial of a dead person takes place within a period of twenty-four hours after he is declared to be dead. The time lag depends primarily on how soon a casket can be bought, the primary source of caskets being carpenter shops in Pinola--a six hour round of walking. The morning after the death, neighbors and bilateral male relatives walk out to the cemetery to dig the grave. They take a liter of trago with them which they drink while they are digging the grave. Others of this group stay at the house of the dead person where a ceremonial is being prepared, where the cadaver is being washed and dressed and wailed over by women who are closely related to the dead person.

The return of the grave diggers to the house signals the

formal drinking pattern. These limits may be expressed in terms of the necessity to drink under those circumstances when one is a member of a group which is engaging in a ceremonial drinking sequence. Every male is a member of several such groups. Under most conditions the ceremonial drinking segment leads to deep drunkenness. Under most conditions the ceremonial drinking segment is followed by an informal drinking segment. Informal drinking segments also lead to deep drunkenness. Following the participation in such segments, a man probably recuperates for a day before he returns to his regular daily routines. Hence a typical drinking performance may be expressed as ceremonial drinking ± informal drinking + recuperating period.

The ceremonial drinking ± informal drinking pattern is, as we have seen, an essential component of many recurring performances in Aguacatenango. We have described the role of drinking in the celebration of family and community holidays, the certification of civil authority, the resolution of conflict, and the etiology as well as the treatment of illness. The indispensability of drinking to such performances is suggested in the following exchange between the ayuntamiento which is retiring and the ayuntamiento which is entering office (as reported by Juan Perez).

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

tuals and everyday tasks. The dialectic of change lies in the interpretations people make of new experience.

My method of study in the field was that of participant-observation combined with extensive eliciting. The assumption implicit in participant-observation that "seeing is believing" denies not only the symbolic significance of the acts one sees, but the relevant social features which are part of their definition of the situation. Rather than impose my own perceptions on the simplest field description, I relied on informants' statements about where, when, what, to whom, and how things were happening. In the case of formally programmed events, I elicited in advance in Tzeltal from two or more informants the sequence of activities as they expected them to transpire. I asked informants to segment the experience they were recounting in as minimal units as they had the descriptive vocabulary to do. This was done for instrumental activities—agriculture and pottery production—as well as ceremonial events in the life cycle and in religious and economic institutions. Implicit in the informants' segmentation of experience is the concept of "molar acts"—purposive and cognitive behavior.[3] The informant says for example that he "eats," not that he raises food to his mouth and chews it. The importance of eliciting descriptions in the performers' own language is indicated in the different way in which experience is lumped or split in Tzeltal. For example, when a curer takes a pulse he both "feels" and "hears" (*ʃʔawai*) the messages communicated by the blood. On the other hand, the verb "to eat" has several terms depending on what is being eaten (Berlin 1967). Their translations into Spanish do not make the same distinctions.

Observation of events in process provided not only a check for validity and completeness of the informants' accounts, but also a means of analyzing the process of change. The attempt to analyze divergence in actual behavior from normative statements in terms of Murdock's ideal-real dichotomy or Kroeber's value-culture and reality-culture is based on an assumption that there is a single perception of the way things ought to be done in

3. Psychologists such as Lewin (1951:72) and Tolman (1961:89) who have studied animal behavior have emphasized that the minimal unit of significant behavior is both purposive and cognitive. Most of my descriptions of behavior are limited to molar behavior, and the analysis of gesture systems is confined to those which have symbolic significance in a ceremonial context.

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

342 776 753 342 755 tite must be satisfied when the house is first occupied and when the children of the house fall ill from a sickness diagnosed by a curer as a result of their souls being eaten. The souls of the inmates of the house hover near the center post when they are not in the body. The soul calling ceremony is held near this center post. If someone is cured in a house not his own, he must not sit near this post because his soul will be confused with those of the inmates of the house. The curing arch is erected directly before the center post, over the square hole in which the ceremonial offering of a sheep's head is buried when the house is built. A live chicken is buried in this spot if the illness is severe.

776 778 769 TABLE 3. Spirits and Places

Place	*Place spirit*	*Person spirit*
Loci of spirits to be supplicated		
House	Spirit of the house (*sʔulel na*)	Spirits of children (*sʔuleletik yuntikil*)
Spring of San Nicolás	Little Ladino (*ʔin kaʃlan*)	Spirits of male patients (*sʔuleletik yuʔun ǩeremetik*)
Spring of Pahaltón	Little Ladina (*ʔin ʃinlan*)	Spirits of female patients (*sʔuleletik yuʔun ʔaʔiletik*)
Cave of Ancestors	Lopez brothers (*Šuntonetik*)	Spirits of townspeople (*sʔuleletik spisil teklum*)
Loci of spirits to be avoided		
Cave of Don David	Ladino moneylender (*Klabil*)	Petitioners for wealth
Cave of the Black Man	Devil, or black man (*ʔihkʼal winik*)	Witches
Cave of Juan Santos	Deceased recipient of wealth from Cave Hwan Santil	Petitioners for wealth
Stone Cave	Owner of cave (*Yahwal sʔen*)	Petitioners for wealth
Cave of Elotes	Owner of cave (*Yahwal sʔen*)	Petitioners for wealth
Cave of the Star	Owner of star (*Yahwal ʔekʼ*)	Curers and witches

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

342 527 782 756 [788]

the animal. The curer received from him the severed head and paws which he placed in a large gourd. Then the curer served a potion of herbs in springwater to all of the members of the household. The final ritual act was for the curer to smoke an article of clothing belonging to each member of the household over the incense burning in front of the center arch at the back wall. Liquor was served continaully throughout the ceremony, [273] *the first drink always being given to the curer followed by one to the elder houseowner. The first drink was served immediately after the cutting of the jugular vein of the sheep. Flowing blood, water, and liquor are spirit media symbolically linked in ritual behavior. Between each of the major ritual acts—the slaughtering of the sheep, the burial of the head, the serving of the springwater and herbs, and the smoking of the clothing with incense—the curer prayed, but his prayers were so mumbled that I could not hear or record them. Informants said that it was a variation of the prayer given at the first house fiesta. After the rituals, a stew made with the sheep meat was served with tortillas to all the visitors. The music of guitar and* [533] *gourd rattle, played during the ritual by young male relatives continued after the meal, and the guests remained in the house drinking and dancing for the rest of the afternoon.*

Elements of these house fiestas are repeated when any of the children of 755 • the household is ill. A severe illness, diagnosed as being caused by the devil eating the soul of the patient, requires offering a meal to the house spirit. The square hole is reopened, and a live black chicken, male if the patient is a boy and female if it is a girl, is placed inside. A food offering of one-fourth liter of liquor, one peso's worth of bread, and 50 cents' worth of chocolate is placed inside with the chicken, and a square board is fitted on top of the hole "to keep the chicken alive for eight days so that the house spirit will hear his cries." When the curing arch is removed, the hole is filled in with dirt over the chicken, now dead, which provides a meal for the spirit house earth.

When the houseowner is sick, an appeal for health is made to the spirit [776] in the house post. The members of the household kiss the post, a splinter is removed and burned in an incense burner with *pom*, the resin of pine. This odor is pleasing to the house spirit.

When a serious illness caused by witchcraft has been cured, the patient 000

18 When a serious illness caused by witchcraft has been cured, the patient must be protected against reentry of the evil by a gift of medicine to the house. Palm crosses are made for the corner posts and the entry, and a medicine consisting of a mixture of garlic and creosote, the seeds of mustard, and *polčan*, a "hot" herb, is mixed. As the crosses are nailed on the posts, the curer marks a cross with the medicine over the palm cross. This "covers the eyes of the evil spirit" so that it will not enter the house. In the Eyes of the Ancestors

The relationship between house spirit and the spirits of the residents is an uneasy one. Fear is associated with this capricious spirit, who might make an alliance with evil spirits, and whose power is evident only in sickness and in death, never in good deeds. A sense of alienation is conveyed in the fact that the house spirit and the spirits of the spring are conceived of as Ladinos. Spirits of the house and of the landscape are exacting landlords from whom the tenants expect nothing in return for their offerings but freedom from harm. Acceptance of the offerings seals a contract between spiritual occupants that must continually be renewed in order to maintain the balance of security expressed in the phrase "to be of one heart." The payment of a "tribute" in the form of food, liquor, and entertainment is part of a larger strategy by which these Indians ensure their survival by appeasement of overlords, demanding government officials, and the very rats which live in their houses and feed on the corn they store in the eaves.

The springs. Other meeting grounds for the spirits of people and places are the springs. The major spring, San Nicolás, is located on the southwestern periphery of the town. It provides drinking water and water for irrigating the cultivated lands. A second spring, called Pahaltón, lies closer to the village and provides a smaller stream of water directed into the canals irrigating the fields of the center. Some say the spirit of San Nicolás is a small Ladino boy; others say he is a man. The spirit of Pahaltón is a female non-Indian, or *Ladina*. The spirits of these waters are able to effect miraculous cures for patients who have lost their souls or those who are of two hearts because of upset social relations in the home. Male patients are brought to San Nicolás and female patients are brought to Pahaltón to seek a miracle. In the curing ceremony an arch of flowers entwined in pine boughs is constructed as closely as possible to the spring

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970

NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

waters. The curer brushes the patients with branches of the cooling bushes and herbs growing near the spring, the same ones used in the fiesta of inauguration and the curing ceremonies conducted in the house. The strategy of making the house spirit happy by providing music, dancing, and drinking is repeated at the spring to make the water spirit happy. Some of the family of the patient must remain in the house as "waiters" (*maliwanehetik*) to receive the spirit if it should arrive before its owner. The maliwanehetik must drink as much liquor as the participants at the spring.

The Cave of the Ancestors. The ancestors, the *me?tiktatik*, were believed to have lived in a cave in the hills lying on the peripheries of the township. In the myth that follows, they are given a historical identity as two brothers, the Shuntonetik. Shunton is one of the Tzeltal patronyms of families still living in the town, and in fact the narrator of this version of the myth is Mariano Shunton, whom people consider a descendant of the ancestors.[6]

Formerly a priest asked for a document to be delivered to Antigua in Guatemala. Two messengers were sent with it, but they did not return. Another messenger went and did not return. Four or five more messengers were sent out and did not come back. Finally they sent a man from the cabildo with his younger brother. They left early in the morning, and the elder brother said as he left the other town officials, "If I succeed, I want a fiesta. Look for my sign of four arches [rainbow]."

The two brothers first went to a hill. There they called upon their swayohelik [*animal spirits*]. *First the animal spirit of the elder brother spoke. He said, "I am a stone." Then the animal spirit of the younger brother said, "I am a stick. Moreover, I am a snake and a maguey plant." The elder brother said, "Then we are well off. Let us go."*

6. The same identification of a lineage patronym with the most important sacred hill is found in other Tzeltal- and Tzotzil-speaking communities (Holland 1963, Hermitte 1964). The pattern may have originated in a period of pre-Conquest expansion when the dominant lineage was assigned a custodial leadership over the new settlement, with their spirits remaining as guardians of the community. Members of the contemporary communities who bear the same patronym do not have any privileged position. These associations of past and contemporary belief are, as Vogt (1964:216) cautions, still hypothetical.

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

The relationship of respect and obedience between parents and children is expected to last throughout life. When a boy reaches the age of eighteen, his parents are expected to provide him with a wife. Wealthier families tend to fulfill this obligation at an earlier age than do poorer families, in which the boy may have to work in the fincas or in the sawmills to acquire the money for his own marriage.

Instruction in sexual behavior and reproduction is not characterized by continuity, as is instruction about work tasks. Children are given no information about sex prior to marriage, and girls remain entirely innocent. They may be pregnant several months before they are aware of what is happening. The complete sexual segregation in work tasks and play during adolescence makes the relationship between sexes strained.

Even after marriage, the parents are concerned with maintaining their child's marital situation, or, if they judge their child's spouse to be incorrigible, to help him get rid of his partner. In the case of women, in particular, parents continue to provide a refuge in case a daughter's husband should die, be sent to prison, or prove incompatible. Parents usually accompany their children if they are called into court, and failure to attend is tantamount to admitting the guilt of the child.

In successful marriages, the parents-in-law are equivalent to parents and are called "mother" and "father." The parents of both spouses attend the life crisis ceremonies of their children and grandchildren. Grandparents provide support and care for grandchildren if their parents should die or remarry.

When parents reach the age of about sixty-five, they are no longer expected to work actively. A man will then distribute all of his land and animals among his children. He will expect to be taken care of by all of his children, but special responsibility falls on the youngest who will inherit the house. Sometimes aged parents move from one of their children's houses to another, spending a few months or years with each. Children are expected to pay for any curing ceremonies necessary in their parents' old age and to provide a good funeral appropriate to their wealth. Failure to do this incurs loss of respect with the neighbors and collateral relatives of the deceased. If the parents die after they have distributed their possessions, the crisis following the death is minimal. At the funeral, mature children of a deceased parent exhibit to the community their filial respect.

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

593 worked in the sawmill, he was not as willing to hand over his wages to
578 his wife as is the farmer, who according to established custom gives the
608 proceeds from the sale of his crop to his wife. The judges advise the man
571 to stay sober, adding, "If you want a woman, you ought to support her.
692 You shouldn't fight." They entreat the wife to return to her husband's house "and make a fire there." They refuse to release the marriage license, and the woman's father reluctantly agrees. He has the last word, warning the husband: "The day after tomorrow, don't come back here with a couple more children and say, 'I don't want you; go back to your mother's house.' You are lucky to have a wife. If you don't have a wife, you go get drunk every day. But with a wife, life is good. She will give you coffee and corn to eat. Don't go on fighting whether drunk or sober. Both my compadres [referring to the judges] have advised you."

755 The curing ceremony as a means of adjusting interpersonal conflict is
608 discussed at greater length in the following chapter. Padrinos of baptism,
571 compadres, and other members of the patient's me?iltatil attend, both to
578 see that the curer is performing his duties properly and to lend spiritual
182 support. Like the household and court review of conflict, it permits the open airing of grievances and relies on the authority of elders. Drinking
[273] liquor is a means of restoring good feelings, either as a follow-up to the review of court cases or as a continuous measure of goodwill in curing.

182 The responsibility of the me?iltatil for repairing personal relationships
571 in the family underwrites the importance of this institution in the commu-
608 nity. In these institutionalized means of settling conflict the society recog-
578 nizes the inevitability of friction in intimate relations and draws upon the resources of personnel and techniques developed in the life crisis rituals.

182 The me?iltatil are the guardians of individuals. The security that they
156 provide depends upon the individual conforming to the group norms.
608 They are a personal reference group maintaining customary ways of be-
571 having. I shall show in the following chapters how they are linked as the inner core to a system of guardianship provided by curers within each side of the dual division and by civil authorities at the community-wide level.

182 These are the agents who, by providing models of how the progenitors
608 behaved and by channeling responses to social change, maintain the sense
571 of equilibrium and the illusion of changelessness. The sense of continuity

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

the curer is a potentially dangerous witch, he can be persuaded to fight the evil power of another. One of the most dangerous and powerful witches, until he was killed five years ago, was a man who boasted as he was curing a patient, "The evil [pukuh] in me will win over that of the witch!"

Curing behavior is classified in Tzeltal according to five major schema: (1) pulsing (*pikel ch'ih*), (2) drawing out the evil (*slok'es ?ak'tamel*), (3) calling the soul (*tamohel*), (4) medicating the illness (*poštawane camel*, and (5) medicating the house (*poštawane na*). Each behavioral schema represents the highest level of a behavioral taxonomy which includes discrete actions described below.

Pulsing. The course of the cure for all illnesses is set in motion by the diagnosis through pulsing Throughout the cure, pulsing is performed to gauge the effectiveness of each step. The curer is chosen on the basis of his ability to pulse; when anyone is asked why a curer was chosen, the consistent answer is, "He knows how to pulse." The significance of the curer's ability to pulse is related to the fact that the first level of contrast establishing a taxonomy of diseases is that between "evil" and "good" determined by pulsing. The essence of the pulsing is a diagnosis of the patient's social relationships. It is a kind of exploratory "sociopsy" comparable to the stage of biopsy in modern medicine, resting on a notion that the witch "leaves his signature in the blood." and the curer "hears/feels" it. He does this by placing his thumb over the pulse at the wrist, inner elbow, and sometimes the inner knee joint and temples. The logic is that the blood passes from the heart and "talks" at the pulse points, revealing the condition and needs of the heart. The blood of the curer enters into communication with that of the patient when he holds his own thumb pulse against the patient's pulse. He does not look for the physiological symptoms on which modern medicine bases diagnosis, but for what the blood tells about the patient's relations with people in his social environment and for what the heart needs. Disease symptomology, such as fever and locus of pain, provides the basis for assigning medicines at a later stage in the cure.

Some curers use thirteen candles set before the curing arch to corroborate diagnoses made in the pulsing; if, for example, the candles bend in-

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

755 ward, the illness is interpreted as a result of trouble within the family. But the use of candles is often interpreted as showing the curer's lack of ability to pulse properly.

755 757 *Taking out the evil.* The evil is drawn out by bleeding or by sucking. Bleeding is diagnostic, curative, and preventative in function. Confirmation of the preliminary diagnosis made in pulsing comes in the bleeding: "clinical" examination by pulsing is reviewed by the "laboratory" findings of the blood analysis. Bleeding is used in cases of surface pains to draw out the evil which is causing the pain. The patient enters the sweatbath so that the heat will stimulate the flow of blood and lessen the pain. The curer makes scratches with broken glass near the source of the pain. Cupping, called *la ventosa,* is done by placing hot water, a piece of pitch pine, and thirteen handmade cigarettes in the gourd. These are very "hot" items, not in the sense of caloric content but of soul power. When these hot items have heated the gourd, they are thrown out and liquor is poured in and burned. When all the liquor is burned, the gourd is slapped onto the cut, so that it "grabs" the flesh, and the blood flows into
755 the vacuum. The diagnosis comes in burning the blood. The curer takes the gourd into the yard so that the odors containing the evil will not linger in the house when the blood is burned. He is accompanied by the guests while the patient remains in the house with an attendant. He gives an account of what the witch has put in the blood. Some of the items I have seen discovered were a wood splinter, explained as evidence of the envy the witch felt because the patient's husband was making a fence; lard, evidence that the witch coveted a pig of the patient; grain of corn or bean, evidence that the witch envied them their harvest. These items are probably inserted by the curer in some slight of hand trick.

The curer prevents the recurrence of the disease by sealing the cuts with garlic and liquor, elements which the devil does not like. The power of the curer is exhibited when he draws out the evil. At this moment he is confronting the enemy directly, fighting the animal spirit of whoever is causing the witchcraft.

The items found in the blood are always attributed to the envy of the witch who is causing the illness. Envy can be countered by the curing rit-

71 Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

uals. The resources expended in the process of curing counterbalance the patient's greater wealth which provoked the envy initially. The witch starts the sickness by going to one of the caves in the hills where he burns a candle, drinks a liter of liquor, and prays that the object of his envy fall ill. The essential element in the fight against the witch is the act of drinking by all those present at the curing. In consuming their own liquor, often paid for by the sale of cattle or crops, they mitigate the envy of the witch. If the witch persists, he must continue to spend money on the liquor necessary to initiate the witchcraft after each ceremonial cure. Part of the tactic of a rapid series of cures is to demonstrate willingness to use all of the family's resources if necessary to counteract the rituals of the witch. The statement that they drink "in order to finish with the money" takes on significance in this strategy of limiting envy by expending resources.

Medicating the illness. The cure of the disease comes in the bathing or heating of the patient and the application or ingestion of medicines, usually a combination of patent medicines purchased in the nearby Ladino town. The specific cures called for depend on the secondary classification of the disease: if it is a "cold disease," hot medicines are applied; if it is a "hot disease," cold medicines are used.

Two kinds of bathing are performed, one a kind of steam bath, called "rise over the fire," for cold illnesses, and another a cold bath for hot illnesses. Chills and fever require both treatments. In the first case, a large charcoal fire is made inside the main room of the patient's house. When the fire is strong, two thick green logs are placed on it to create smoke. The patient mounts on a stool over the fire, and a straw mat is held over him to capture the steam. When he is sweating a great deal, the curer gives him a drink of cold medicines.

The cold bath is given with thirteen branches from bushes which grown near the spring.[4] Patent medicines dissolved in Spring water include syrup of *isidro,* cloves, vapor rub, epsom salts, aspirin, and other cold herbs or juices such as lemon, grapefruit, *cintula,* and *tok'o.* If the trouble is chills and fever, hot herbs such as *inajo, lumahiya,* and apple may be added to restore the body's hot-cold balance. A bad curer may reverse the medicines,

4. These include plants called *tihiliha?, yokmut, tsitsil hi?, lolwamal* and *yetalbulha?.*

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

giving hot medicines for hot diseases. If this is discovered, he will be subject to accusations of witchcraft. The relatives of the patient are present as witnesses "to see what medicines are given."

In the case of infections, the curer cauterizes the wound, a process called "take out the odor." First he smells the wound, checking on the severity of the infection. He mixes chile and hot charcoal and puts them on the wound to "cause the evil to rise to the surface." He then sucks on the wound, and spits out a "worm" which indicates the kind of evil caused by witchcraft. He covers the wound with mentholated cream and binds it. The patient is kept covered.

Calling the soul. The major effort in soul-calling (tamohel) is concentrated on preparing the patient and the house for the return of his soul. This is done for illnesses caused by fear and resulting in soul-loss. Here a knowledge of the setting is crucial to understand each act. An arch of pine boughs is set at the center post because it is here that the souls of the inmates of the house cluster (over the square hole at the foot of the post where the sheep's head is buried during the inauguration of the house). Thirteen candles, including a large, 50-cent one in the center and twelve 20-cent ones, are set before the arch. If the patient is being cured in the house of the curer, which happens when he goes to another town for a cure, the arch is put near the door in order that his soul not mingle with the souls of the curer's household. The patient is laid out on a mat in front of the curing arch, or if he is a small child, he is held in the arms of his mother. The curing is scheduled so that the arrival of the soul occurs when it will not be seen by people passing in the street. This would cause it embarrassment, and it would not enter the house. The patient continues to sleep under the arch each night until it is removed nine days later. As he sleeps, his soul enters in a dream and is reunited with the body. A guitar and seed rattle are played continuously during the ceremony to make the spirits of guests, patient, and house "of one heart." Many rounds of liquor are served in order to "finish with our money" and thus reduce the envy of the one who caused the witchcraft.

The soul-calling is combined with a cold bath to cure the illness. The patient is disrobed, and the curer brushes him with branches of plants

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

from the spring and a live black chicken which draws the heat from the patient, taking it into its own body. The branches are dipped in a mixture of raw cocoa, pieces of melon mixed in water, and other "cold" items. A new set of clothing, smoked over an incense burner in which pitch pine is burned, is put on the patient. A common meal of chicken or beef stew is served with tortillas to all the guests.

In the case of more persistent illnesses, the bathing may take place at the springs. Male patient go to the large spring of San Nicolás and female patients to Pahaltón. A curing arch is erected near the spring. The curer calls upon the spirit of the spring to perform a miracle. Some members of the family stay behind at the house so that if the spirit of the patient should return before he does, it will be welcomed. The people waiting in the house, called maliwanehetik, must drink as much liquor as do those at the spring.

Sometimes the soul of a child is called at the place where fear caused it to be lost. The cure is started at the house, and then part of the group goes to the place which the curer has designated as the location of the fright. Soil is gathered in a kerchief or item of the patient's clothing and is placed at the head of his bed. As the group returns to the house, one of the child's relatives plays the guitar at the gate, and the curer sweeps a path for the soul with branches he has taken from the spring. Inside the house, the soul is again called while the curer brushes the child with spring branches. The mother embraces the child as incense is smoked over him and all his clothing. The child is then pulsed to determine whether the soul has returned.

Medicating the house. The strategy of medicating the house is tied to an understanding of the interaction of the spirit of the house and those of the inmates. When the evil sent out by the witch enters the house, it first asks permission of the house posts to enter the soil of the house. The house is adorned with pine branches and flowers to make the house-soul happy. Old men make palm crosses for the center post and corner posts of the yard. One large 50-cent candle is lit at the center post with small 20-cent candles on each side. When these candles are lighted they "blind the eye of evil spirits who can see only in the dark." A black chicken is buried alive in the square hole where the offering of the sheep

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970

NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

755 776 342 has been made at the time of the house inauguration. Food for the chicken—bread, chocolate, tortilla, and liquor—is put in the hole so it will stay alive for eight days.

The logic of the meal is that the house needs nourishment and for this reason has been fighting with the inmates and causing their illness. After the guests have been fed, the curer marks a cross with a mixture of garlic, creosote, seeds of mustard, and a "hot" herb called poščan, on the center post inside the house and on the corner posts. Like the candles, the cross serves to "blind the eye" of the evil spirits so that they will not reenter the house and talk the spirit of the house into causing harm.

This ceremony replicates that of the house meal at the time of the inauguration (Chapter 1). The music of the guitar and gourd rattle is intended to make both the soul of the house and the souls of the inmates content. Why the curing of the house is always done on Thursday, when "the holy earth is open," is not fully understood by the curers I have questioned; they say, "We have forgotten how to talk to the earth." Chamula curers are reputed to be able to talk to the earth, and consultations may be sought with them if the illness continues.

755 776 782 [539] *Prayer.* The curers talk with the soul of the thirteen ancestors of the world,[5] to the "spirits of the heaven and of the church," and to saints of neighboring towns, asking for a good cure. The following prayer is one given by the oldest and most honored of the curers:

Sacred earth, sacred world
Thirteen holy world, holy flowers
In the center of another holy world

Look mother, its clay
I am a child, its clay.
Holy heaven, Jesus Christ
Holy herbs give the spirit

[801] 5. The number 13 has significance in the Maya cosmology in the 13 levels of heaven (Thompson 1964:125). The 13 candles set before the curing arch symbolize the 13 holy worlds. The meal for the house spirit includes 13 cigarettes.

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970

NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

755
776
782
[539]

The companions of the patient
are gathered here with his father
In the center of this other holy
earth
Holy earth, take out the fever.

The curer then calls upon each of the saints of the surrounding towns, asking for help in bringing about a miracle. First he calls upon the major saints of the pueblo (Santa Lucía, San Francisco, Santiago, San Pedro the Martyr, and the Virgen de Rosario), then those of Teopisca (San Augustín and the Virgen de Mercedes), of San Cristóbal (San Cristóbal and Justo Juez), of Villa Carranza (Señor del Pozo and San Bartolo), of Socoltenango (the Virgen de Candelaria), of Villa las Rosas (San Miguel and San José), of Comitán (Santo Domingo, San Caralampio, and the Virgen de Santa Teresa), and finally Señor Esquipulas of Tulanca. Thus he defines the meaningful spiritual universe of the village, building a kind of hegemony of defense and protection.

755
757

At any point throughout the cure the patient may consult the doctor sent by the I.N.I., the priest, or the schoolteacher, all of whom compete with each other in gaining clients by dispensing medicines. This does not undermine the role of the curer since curing the disease is considered a separate issue from stopping the witchcraft which is causing it. The disease may be cured, but the persistence of the witchcraft will eventually cause death through spiritual malaise unless treated by the curer.

[756
776]

All the people of the village know the common herbs and the sicknesses for which they should be used. The basis for the curer's power thus is not specialized knowledge of medicines, but the strength of his swayohel in fighting that of the enemy, and his esoteric knowledge of pulsing.

756

Formerly curers received minimal pay for practicing. The family of the patient offered about 20 pesos or worked in the fields of the curer. Curers refused larger payments because they said their skill came from God, and it would be a sin to accept money for it. This practice is continued today by one old curer for patients within the community. However, he receives from 100 to 200 pesos from out-of-town patients. A Ladina from the neigh-

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 156]

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

The Logic of Curing

Diagnosis of illness in Tzo'ontahal is a kind of checklisting against a native taxonomic hierarchy of disease (Frake 1963). The curer is concerned primarily with establishing whether the illness is evil or good, secondarily whether cold or hot, and his prestige depends upon his ability to classify the disease at these highest levels of contrast.

In questioning the meaning of each act, I encountered no hesitation in giving answers, as I have in investigating other performances. Each act is understood in terms of the part it plays in the diagnosis and curing of the patient, and is in turn tied into a cognitive reference scheme which takes into account the patient's relations with kin and neighbors, environmental conditions, and the state of the patient's constitution. The notion of process underlying the classification of diseases explains some apparent contradictions in behavior. Good illness may so weaken the patient that he is vulnerable to the invasion of evil, and the tactic must shift to counter witchcraft. The alternation of chills and fever means that cold medicines must be administered followed by hot. The curer maintains communication with the blood in frequent pulsing to check whether he has overcome the evil and to ascertain what the blood wants.

The logical premises underlying diagnosis can be summarized as follows: Social relationships are primary causes of illness, while the conditions of the environment, such as cold wind or rain in which the patient gets drenched, provide conditions favorable to the entry of the disease. The effect of the evil projected depends upon the condition of the patient. Thus a mature adult may have the internal resistance to reject disease, while children, the aged, or women after childbirth are more vulnerable. Accidental wounds may render the victim more vulnerable to witchcraft as well as to "sickness of God." The malefactor achieves his goal if any member of the household or even a chicken or cow of the person against whom he has a grudge falls ill.

The emphasis on the origin of illness means that the study of symptoms is of little significance. People involved in some conflict may define themselves as patients or be defined as such by their intimate social group even without having any apparent physical illness. Sometimes a colicky baby

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

Sometimes a colicky baby may become the focus of a curing ceremony designed to "cure" the conflict between husband and wife. In one case, the parents of a healthy young wife separated from her husband staged a curing ceremony to dramatize her marital plight to the in-laws.

The breakdown of the curing hierarchy and the recruitment procedures which were maintained by the elder leaders (see Chapter 10) has led to a reevaluation of the role of the curers in the community. They have lost their position as me'iltatil representing the ancestors who guard over the community. Curers are increasingly being accused of sorcery, and over ten of them have been killed in the past decade as witches (Nash, J. 1967). Paradoxically, it is the belief in their evil power which leads to their persisting role in the society. Clients feel that the more evil the curer is, the more able he is to combat evil. In a community dominated by belief in witchcraft, they are both feared and valued for their ability to control it. From a position as arbiters of morality, they have become the chief targets as deviants from the moral code. Despite the loss of confidence in curers as guardians, they are still called upon to fight the evil of witchcraft, and nearly every day a ritual is performed. The regimen of the curing ritual has not been upset by the undermining of the curers' position. Tied to a diagnostic system emphasizing the state of the patient's social relations, the same procedures are carried out even when modern medicines are used.

In curing practices, the Indian sees himself as the key figure in the drama of his own self-victimization. His illnesses come from within his own world, usually from within his family or close neighborhood. They are a mark of guilt for having excited the envy or hatred of associates. While the Indian is often portrayed in the role of passive victim to outside domination, in his own self-projection he sees himself dominated by powers within the community. Greater participation and equality in the wider society may in the future release him from these fear-provoking figures in his own environment.

There is no double standard for extramarital sexual relations, although men abuse the prohibition more often than women, judging from court cases. The ability the women has to assert herself rests on her economic contribution in pottery-making and on the fact that female household help is not part of the labor market.

Female sexuality has the connotation of negative power over male sexuality. A woman should not step over a man's feet or his clothing since she could affect his virility. This negative power emanates from the odors of a woman's body, and is captured by anything in contact with it. A woman's skirt cast over the head of a bull can tame him, and the water used by a woman to wash her body, particularly the vagina if she has had children, is drunk to cure snake bites because it is very "cold."

Sexuality is seldom extended beyond persons to material objects. There is some feeling that a man's tools, especially the machete and hoe, are male and that a woman's tools, especially the grinding stone, are female. Corn is a crop of men, while beans are a woman's crop, identified with the Virgin. But I could not get much farther with such distinctions.

The accidents of birth determine the recruitment of successive generations into the family of orientation. There is no outright adoption, but a child may be "lent" to a childless couple, usually by a sibling of one of the spouses, or a grandchild may take up residence in the house of a grandparent when all the children have moved to separate residences. Parents discipline a badly behaved child with the threat, "I am going to sell you to care for someone's house," but I have never known of a case of outright sale of a child.

The selection of a spouse is a decision based on both universalistic as well as particularistic considerations. Both the boy and the girl should be hardworking, sober, and dutiful residents of the same section of the dual division. It is considered to be of greater importance that the boy feel affection toward the girl than vice versa. The "taking of the heart" is a test of the strength and exclusiveness of the boy's interest in his chosen mate, and there is no counterpart for the girl. Although there is no term for romantic love, the closest approximation being "want" or "ask for" a woman, there is an awareness of the importance of a warm, affectionate basis if a marriage relationship is to last "at least until the day after tomorrow." A suitor is accepted if he is known to be a hard worker and if he

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

meal for the house is buried in the inauguration ceremony (Chapter 1) and the door. Left and right are orientation points viewed from inside facing the door. Women of the house sit on mats near the center post. Female visitors occupy the mats to the left of the post and male visitors sit on benches lining the right wall and the interior wall. If it is a large ceremony for the ritual of inauguration or a celebration by the captain of a fiesta, only women enter the house, and the men sit on borrowed benches lining the walls of the porch.

Relative age is indicated by position in the seating arrangement. For women the seat of honor, occupied by the oldest woman present, is at the center post; other women of the household sit on a straw mat or board in order of descending age clockwise around the room. This order is modified by the presence of the grandmother who, if not a woman speaker, retires to the left (facing door from inside) corner. Visiting women sit to the right of the center post with the oldest immediately next to the post and those decreasing in age and stature to her right. For men, the seat on the bench nearest the door to the interior is called the "head of the bench"; this is the seat of the leading nakawane. The rest of the nakawanehetik sit along this bench in order of age. On the bench facing them sits the house owner, with his brothers and other visitors to his right in an age-ranked order. The b'alnialetik sit on the right wall bench.

Since prestigeful roles are usually a concomitant of age, especially in the house ceremonies, there is seldom conflict between age and role status. When conflict does occur, it is only seen at the top level; thus, the grandmother if not active because of age, retires to the corner while the woman speaker, who must order the women in the kitchen and receive visiting dignitaries, takes over this position. I have seen the leader of the č'om take precedence over the leader waiter who was older, because of the important role of the former.

When the family is carrying out a ritual, it is felt that the house should never be left vacant. The role of the "waiters" (maliwanehetik) is specifically that of remaining in the house while others of the celebrants are involved in ritual acts outside of the house. When the members of the betrothal party go to the girl's house, for example, the waiters are left behind; or when the patient leaves with the curer and some of the curing

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

342 party to go to the spring, at least one relative remains in the house to
796 greet the soul if it should precede the curing party.
[584]
[755] Behavior in household rituals is described in Chapters 1, 5, and 8.
[128]

The Cabildo

344 The cabildo, called by the people of the town the "cold house,"[1] was
[196] built following the revolution of 1915, when Piñeda's revolutionary soldiers
[175] destroyed the original colonial structure. The tiles of the roof were confiscated from a finca which the Indians invaded in 1941 in an unsuccessful attempt to gain additional lands. When they were unable to maintain their hold on the land, they burned the owner's house and took the tiles to the town center where they remain as a symbol of their defiant action. They refer to this event with pride. The cabildo houses the jail, equipped with a barred wooden door, in one of its wings, and the Ejido Commission office in the other.

344 Within the cabildo, each official has his established place. The cabildo is
352 furnished with a table at which the president and síndico sit on wooden
621 chairs made in the Indian town of Chamula. Four benches lining the
554 walls on either side of the entry provide seating for the civil officials. On
576 the right side (looking out at the plaza) sit the judges in order of rank;
[693] the regidores, in similar sequence follow them. The principales, and formerly the alfereces, sit on the left side when they appear for ceremonial occasions. This spatial allocation establishes drinking and greeting order as well. Visitors can go directly from one to another in the formal greeting of a handclasp and murmured "good morning, father," or "good afternoon, father," without violating age-respect patterns.

344 During court cases, the claimant and his supporters sit on the bench to
352 the left of the door; on other occasions the bench is occupied by visitors or
695 petitioners. The police sit on one of the two benches lining the outside
[625] wall, or retire to the kitchen, a wooden slat lean-to on the left wing of the

[171] 1. Bunzel (1952) notes that in prayers, the cabildo in Chichicastenango is referred to as "the cold house, the icy house." Although the Quiché term is not given in her manuscript, one can see a similarity in the rhyming couplets and metaphorical allusions in the prayers of the towns.

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

869
776

Religious Behavior

Socialization of the child includes teaching him how to adjust to spirits of the house and of the surrounding hills and springs as well as to people in his social environment. He learns the obligations he owes to these spirits in the rituals of house inauguration and curing. Place spirits are given an ethnic identity. The ancestor figures who live in the cave are Indians from whom all the people originate. The Ladino spirits residing in the houses and springs are a mythological projection of a conquered people who have learned to coexist with their conquerors by paying tribute of candles, food, liquor, and entertainment. If the spirits are not won over, they will admit the evil spirits who bring sickness and death. Their presence is known only by the trouble they permit rather than by good occurences; the miracles they perform are an undoing of the harm they have permitted.

776
782
789

The belief in the potentially dangerous nature of these spirits when their envy or appetite is aroused is linked to an understanding that men and gods alike are jealous and vindictive. It generates behavior that is in conformity with that of the ancestors. A sense of security is reinforced by the protective symbols of incense, the cross of palm hung on the entrance posts of the yard and house, candles which "blind the eye of the devil," and garlic mixed with hot herbs which exude an odor that evil spirits dislike. When the uneasy contract between spiritual and human coresidents is upset, a curing ritual is performed to make everyone "of one heart." Behavior with respect to both spirits and people stems from a policy of appeasement through entertainment and liquor provided in household ceremonials.

[765]
[571]
[273]

776
177
178

Behavior differs in regard to the category of saints called "spirits in the heaven" and those called "spirits in the church." Spirits of the heavens have incorporated pre-Conquest deities with those introduced by the missions. They are a more powerful force influencing human moral behavior. Illicit sexual relations carried out in the milpa by day are believed to arouse the envy of "Our Father the Sun" who will cause the milpa to burn by refusing to give way to rain. Similarly "Our Grandmother the

[834]
[784]

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

credit to insects who carried it from the hills. Still another myth synthesizes both pre-Conquest and Catholic agents: San Antonio, seeing an insect bearing a kernel of corn, persuaded a woodpecker to break open the rock which blocked the entrance to the hill where the corn was stored and then organized the insects to bring forth the corn. The contradictions in these myths do not motivate the people to bring the several versions into line with one another because the rituals associated with beliefs concerning crops provide an overall insurance rather than a specific contract. The Indians do not trust their security to any one saint or even group of deities. The two candles lit in the milpa following the harvest are an offering to the "owner of the earth"; along with this, offerings of corncobs are made to the saints in the church and to the house saint. Even the birds are left an offering of corn kernels in the fields after the harvest so that they will not be jealous of the farmer.

These myths fail to provide specific charters for action. What they do provide is a set of dispositions to behave in certain ways. The underlying disposition is that of self-imposed guilt and recrimination. The ancestors left their cave because the people failed to give them a fiesta; the spirit of money left the town because the religious officials in the past failed to adorn the church and improvidently strewed the floor with green peso notes in place of pine needles. Sickness and poverty are attributed to their own failures.

Another disposition is that of appeasement through ceremonial entertainment. This is carried out in the fiestas for the spirits of the church and the spirits of the heaven just as for the spirits of the house, caves, springs, and hills surrounding the town. Community-wide disaster is interpreted as a direct result of failure to perform rituals establishing reciprocity with the spirits. When individuals face crop loss, they review their own ritual obligations to see what went wrong. The curing ceremony is another effort to appease the devil whom the witch has persuaded to give illness to his victim.

A third such disposition is to project human conflict into the supernatural sphere. The conflict between Santa Lucía and the patron saint of Oxchuk, Santo Tomás was taken to be the reason for the church tower being

7r Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

struck by lightning on two occasions. The solution was to rebuild the tower of metal so that Santo Tomás could not demolish it if he struck again, a defensive reaction which is typical of the Indians in their extra-community relations. When an eclipse of "Our Grandmother the Moon" occurred during my stay in town, everyone went to her assistance, banging metal tools and pots, in what was believed to be a fight with the sun.

The emphasis on self-recrimination and guilt in explaining failure minimizes the build-up of protest. Economic hardship attributed to a man's own improvidence in relation to his fellow man and God are accepted as his lot in life. The drama of the curing ritual projects the Indians' sense of their own guilt for the suffering and poverty they endure.

Political Behavior

The structure of the civil hierarchy has been maintained but organizational changes have occurred which have weakened the basis for it. The alternation of offices between church and civil positions survives in the lower levels, but the new leaders in civil affairs now begin in the Ejido Commission, and few of those who pass as president take on posts in the religious hierarchy. The appearance of continuity has been maintained in communal rituals in which the principales provide the link with the past and the alfereces, until 1966, were the link between civil and religious wings; but in the day-to-day running of the town, the officials do not act on these premises. The balance between officials from each side of the dual division has been upset by the population increase on one side. The abolition of the institution of alfereces gives public recognition to the growing awareness of imbalance. Moreover, the factions based on the new trucking cooperatives that cut across the dual division reduce the effectiveness of the dual division in channeling conflict.

Behavioral deviation from the norms is present in all societies and is not in itself an index to structural change. This comes about when new interpretations are given to events that undermine confidence in existing institutions and leaders. Political conflicts in the past were interpreted as a contest between members of the sides of the dual division and hostility

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

Appendix 2

Bloodletting in a Witchcraft Case

755 • 126

The following conversation is from a transcription of a tape recorded in Tzeltal at the home of the curer during a curing ceremony for a man whose illness was diagnosed as caused by witchcraft. The patient arrived at eight-thirty in the morning. Present are the patient, his wife, the curer, his two sons, their wives, his wife's father, and the interviewer who helped me collect the data. The curer's family helped in the bloodletting because his hands shook so badly with palsy that he could not control them.

Curer's Wife: *How did it begin, compadre?*

Patient: *It began in the month of April when I brought my horse to the threshing mill at six o'clock in the morning. As the other horses entered, one pushed his hoof into my stomach. My body was frightened, and I could not bear the pain.*

Patient's Wife: *He couldn't do anything but cry when he came out.*

Interviewer: *Where did the pain begin?*

Patient: *It began in my leg. My whole body and my leg ached a great deal. It was so numb I couldn't feel anything. My child stayed in the threshing shelter three days. A little later I went to hot country and stayed there. My son asked if I was going down to hot country, and I said, "Yes. I am going to look at my horse. I will return soon." I was of one heart until yesterday, and then I lost my heart. A man told me that he wanted another horse. It was Emilio Čilol who told me, "Boy, I want another horse." "It is good. I will get it," I said. "Yes, I will get it." I went to get it yesterday with another horse. I caught him and handed him over along with his companion. Then the pain began. I felt I couldn't bear it. It is for this reason that I came to you.*

Patient's Wife: *Take the gift, father.* [*Hands liquor to curer.*] *It is for this that I came. His illness is much stronger today.*

Patient: *Truly I could not endure it when I arrived home yesterday. I felt I should come to the elder to be cured and hear what he says. It is for this that I came asking for a favor.*

755 Patient's Wife: *There he was lying down for the day.*
126 Patient: *It is the first day I have stepped foot on soil.*
Patient's Wife: *It is today.*
Patient: *I have endured it for days. So I wanted to go get help from your work. He [Emilio] told me, "Go get the horse to work in the wheat." "Good, I am going to get it. Afterward I am going to leave him in the threshing shelter." When I returned in the afternoon, I could not bear walking.*
Patient's Wife: *I told him, "Better not go yet to caponize your horse."*
Patient: *We had another little horse we were thinking of caponizing this year. But now I couldn't think of it. You have heard how it is with me. Let us see what God says.*
Curer's Wife: *Yes, give another [speaking to liquor pourer who was passing out liquor] to the women.*
[273] [554] *[All the company were given drinks. Drinking order was: father of curer's wife, curer, his two sons, wife of curer, interviewer, patient, his wife, wife of curer's two sons.]*
Curer: *Do you want a little more?*
Patient: *No, it is good.*
Curer's Father-in-law: *With your permission. [Drinks his liquor.]*
Curer [to Father-in-law]: *Enter! [Meaning, "Drink the liquor."]*
[The curer began to bleed the patient. He had eight gourds which he applied three times. He took the basin into which he poured the blood out to the yard and buried it, saying, "We cannot burn it inside because it was witchcraft."]
Curer [to patient]: *Can you endure it again?*
Patient: *I can endure it.*
Patient's Wife: *Please, father.*
Curer: *It is good. You don't have to endure it again.*
[Drinking continues.]
Curer's Father-in-law *[pouring blood into a saucer]*: *Look, it is black.*
Curer's Younger Son [to elder brother]: *It is not good, elder brother. [He had noted that the last gourd did not have much blood.]*
Curer's Father-in-law [to interviewer]: *Ah, God, it is not now as it was before. There is much witchcraft.*
Patient's Wife: *Let us see what came out.*
Curer's Father-in-law: *It is black because the witchcraft is well lodged in his body.*
[Curer points to his son where to make another scratch.]
Curer's Elder Son: *Where truly?*

7s Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

755 • 126

Curer: *There truly.*
Curer's Elder Son: *It is the same [meaning, the gourds are yielding the same kind of blood]. Please, Čiko, help a little.*
Curer's Younger Son: *Yes, I will help a little.*
Patient's Father-in-law: *Is there a little water? [He wanted to know if there was a little more water to dip his flower, the* čiliwet, *to sprinkle water on the patient.]*
Patient: *It pains a lot, man!*
Curer's Younger Son: *Yes, it does.*
Curer's Father-in-law: *It is coming out very well with this larger gourd.*
Patient: *I can stand it.*
Curer's Wife: *Whoever comes, he [her husband] can bleed.*
Curer's Father-in-law: *The women are tired now.*
Patient: *Because they are beginning to feel drunk.*
Women: *No, we only smelled the cup! [Laughter; drinking continues.]*
Patient: *Oh, I am tired.*
Women: *It [the bleeding gourd] is very big.*
Curer's Father-in-law: *Do you have another gourd? There is one over there.*
Curer's Wife: *Where? Me? Angela lost it.*
Curer's Father-in-law: *Did you find it?*
Curer's Wife: *No, it stayed there. Look, look well. I will put it here. My sister wanted a bloodletting, and she did not endure it. She got drunk.*
Curer's Father-in-law: *He endured well.*
Curer's Wife: *Why didn't you bring back a little liquor? You are deceiving us.*
Liquor Pourer: *No, because you did not drink it. I am going to bring another.*
Patient [to Curer's Wife]: *Did you drink liquor at the other bloodletting?*
Curer's Wife: *No. We only ate what they gave us.*
Curer: *I don't drink. I used to drink when I was well. When I bled Manuel, I did not get drunk for that.*
Curer's Wife: *When the curer went to see Manuel, one of his arms did not work.*
Curer: *That man endured curing very well. We have to endure. What can you do?*
Patient: *Yes, it is the same sickness he had. There is much air in your hand. It [gourd] is not sucking any more.*
Patient's Wife: *Your blood is afraid. So it is.*
Curer's Father-in-law: *When there is much air in the hand of the curer, you have to take wax and glass.*

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

755
126 [*Curer's Wife passes cloth to wipe blood.*]
Curer: *Another pull.*
Patient: *Please, favor of God!*
Curer: *Formerly I did everything. I pricked the skin, I put on the gourd. I did everything when I was well. Now I cannot do it. My illness has lasted a long time.*
Curer's Wife: *He cannot even get up well. He doesn't eat. When he takes coffee in his hand, he cannot drink well.*
Curer: *I cannot eat beans or beef.*
Curer's Wife: *He can only drink coffee.*
[*The curing is over. The patient and his wife leave shortly.*]

156
621
571
[426]
[155]
[476]
[431]
[608]

getting involved in the fight. He can help relatives in distress pay a debt or give a curing ceremony for a sick child. He can be a "hard worker, ready to offer a hand to a neighbor in need of extra labor" (hel-K'abal). He can send his wife with small presents of food to other households. He can make many compadres among those whom he suspects of possibly being against him, thereby assuring their friendship and respect. In sum, he can create around himself a long chain of loyal villagers who are bound to him by many different obligations. Then, because he is a 'leKil winiK' (one that behaves well with the people), he can "afford" to become rich by local standards without the immediate fear of punishment.

Every household head manipulates his environment in these terms. People try to accumulate riches and protect their paths in other ways. They also try to avoid distributing their accumulated wealth outside their household and to prevent the envy or gossip of those not so bound by loyalty, by hiding from others the knowledge of their possessions.

The result of the contradiction between the egalitarian values on the one hand, and the individual aspirations and behavior on the other, is expressed in gossip, "witchcraft talk" and a constant realignment of loyalties among villagers. Every man suspects another of being better off than one is led to believe, while at the same time he himself tries to keep others from suspecting him, and would not voluntarily give information on how many horses he owns or how much corn he has grown.

The picture of life in Amatenango and Aguacatenango is

CHANGE OF OFFICIALS

ment, engrossed as I was in the task of eliciting the formal sequence of events, "Quiet, S.; let's get on with the fiesta." He persisted in what interested him. 124

Eleven years ago they [who? enemies?] tried to get me. I had a piece of land in hot country. My house here was not ready, but the wood was ready. M. C. a neighbor was jealous [*šil yo?tan*, 'saw his heart']. He had caused another neighbor's illness. He was my wife's *mu?* [literally 'brother-in-law,' in this case the informant's wife's fa's sis's husband]. He didn't have corn or beans. He was jealous because of my crops and the big house I was going to build. 124 578 754 601 602

By now I was asking questions and taking notes. I interposed, "How did you know?" 124 578

I knew because when I got sick, the curer (who was the dead husband of the widow who came to the judges' house) told me. The *cabron* (goat) witches leave their signature in the blood *(yak hilel firma ta čič?)*. Then I went to a curer in Chamula who confirmed it. 754 756

"How did he speak to you?" 124

In Tzotzil. Then I went to Las Casas. Another curer, also a Chamulteco, said, "Here is his signature in your blood. He is working alone." On January 7 I fell in bed. All month from January to the 19th of April I was very sick. I went to Cruz Quemada (colonia of Tzo?ontahal) where F. G. cured me. He burned candles at the curing arch and prayed. 578 755 756 782

"Whom did he pray to?"

The hills, the holy land. Then I got well, but I was very tired. My Swana [wife, Juana] told me "He is going to kill you." I had a rifle. I filled it and went out, but then I returned. Another day I took two measures of trago, took my rifle and went to his house. He was sleeping with his wife close to him in bed, the way we sleep here. I fired four times. The bullets went in his back and came out front. One entered the arm of his wife. Now people say of me I am a killer. I went to the townhall for the enquiry. The man's wife said the door [of the house] was open. She said she did not see me. Afterward I got well. If I hadn't killed him, I never would have lived. Now I am having more trouble first because of the cooperative, then because of my brother being president, and then the comisario. Let us see what will happen this year. If God lends us our life, there are going to be protests. We will walk with our pistols. Špet [wife of Ladino owner of opposing cooperative] gave 1000 pesos to a man from Magronal to kill me. 124 578 682

"How do you know?"

My compadre came and told me. Who knows how many deaths there will be!